

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, MD 20852

5041 '99 AUG 11 P2:35

Each year the US egg industry force molts—intentionally starves for up to 14 days—millions of hens to manipulate egg production. Forced molting is so stressful it destroys the hens' immune systems, predisposing the birds and their eggs to Salmonella Poison. The US Dept of Agriculture's Food Safety & Inspection Service (FSIS) stated: "FSIS recognizes that public health concerns are raised by highly stressful forced molting practices. For example, extended starvation and water deprivation practices lead to increased shedding of Salmonella enteritidis (Se) by laying hens subjected to these practices."

98N-1230; 96P-0418; 97P-O197.

- FDA must do more than put bacteria warning labels on egg cartons and regulate egg refrigeration temperatures.
  - FDA should prohibit the practice of forced molting because forced molting has been scientifically shown to promote disease by destroying the starving hens' immune systems.
  - FDA has jurisdiction to ban farm practices, such as forced molting, that injure human health.
  - FDA must ban the forced molting of laying hens because forced molting is a primary cause of infectious diseases in hens, eggs, and consumers of eggs.
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- FDA was petitioned in April 1998 to ban forced molting. This petition should be granted without further delay.
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Sincerely,



96P-0418

C 145

CROSS FILE SHEET

File Number: 98N-1230/ *C 145*

See File Number: 97P-0197/ *C 146*  
96P-0418/ *C 145*